



Release the Fear Arts Education Support Information

Why We Do What We Do Through Art, Music and Communication

Release the Fear, Inc. (RTF) was founded in 1996 and established as a 501(C)(3) non-profit in 2002, delivering life changing programs to thousands of disadvantaged, disengaged and at-risk youth to help them realize they have the ability to make their dreams, their reality.

Release the Fear, Inc has served over 8,500 youth from throughout the world, changing lives through interactive Art and Music based activities.

How: Our evidence-based curriculum uses the creative processes of art, music, and communication. Our trained facilitators teach, through inquiry-based learning, character education to help youth and adults, combat peer pressure, bullying, anger, and violence of any kind. Our programs awaken a creative consciousness and expose the unlimited potential of critical thinking and problem solving to help participants develop better cognitive behavioral skills, preparing them for life's challenges all while meeting Arizona's college and career readiness standards.



Quantitative Evidence: The Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC) followed a three-year longitudinal study on 928 ADJC juveniles who attended one of more RTF "Inside Out Bridging Possibilities" programs between 2012 and 2015. The results demonstrate the RTF program is helping to reduce recidivism from 43 percent (the ADJC recidivism average) to 32 percent. Vanderbilt researcher Dr. Mark A. Cohen recently revised earlier (1997) estimates the value of saving a high-risk youth. He emphasizes impact of reducing recidivism considering the average cost as \$2.6 to 5.3 Million dollars per youth up to age 18.

A separate report by the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Office released a 2010 report demonstrating the value of Release the Fear's "Inside-Out Bridging Possibilities" workshops on 357 individuals in their juvenile

population. The report said that 30 percent of incarcerated/detained youth recidivate. For the incarcerated youth who participated in one RTF workshop, that recidivism figure dropped to 23 percent. For those who were able to benefit from multiple workshops, it dropped to 16 percent – nearly half of their 30 percent average.

The more we share what we do, the more we are made aware of the tremendous need there is to continue. In a recent letter RTF received from the White House, April 7, 2016: "Today, our criminal justice system holds approximately 2.2 million Americans behind bars at a cost to taxpayers of \$80 billion per year," and, "Too often, the criminal justice system has worked to the detriment of young people, especially those in communities struggling to overcome poverty... By channeling resources into early childhood education and issuing discipline guidance to schools, we are creating pathways to success instead of pipelines to prison."



Research Findings: In the U.S. there are 5.8 million disengaged youth, 16–24, meaning they are not working or attending school. These youth could go either way if not given the proper life skills. Metropolitan Phoenix ranks 13 in the nation for disengaged youth. Over 100,000 youth that could go down one path or another. Arizona is one of the highest in the nation for Department of Child Safety (DCS) services, with 20,000 children in DCS care.

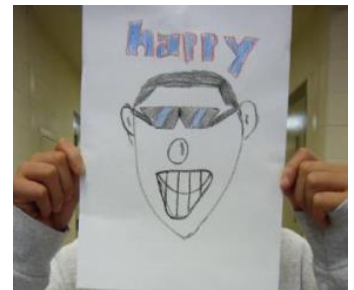
Another huge reason we do what we do is to continue to hear success stories such as these:



Qualitative Evidence: *"I never thought that I'd come this far. I always thought that I'd be forever stuck in a downward spiral, trying to commit suicide, and being a brick wall. I finally came to Florence Crittenton, where I was helped by a Release the Fear program that helped me by showing me that I am much more than an individual. I am someone. I am great, powerful, loved, amazing, worthy, and a leader. I am me. And there's so much more to me than just my past. I am very thankful for everyone that helped me get this far. I have spoken in front of more than 800 people, and told my story. I am grateful for all the things that I get to do. I am currently in 10th grade, and in a dual enrolment class getting 3 full college credits. I am planning on becoming a biophysicist. I plan on helping people, and I look forward to being the change I wish to see in the world."* Shelly – 17

"This experience helped me open my eyes and realize all the many opportunities I've been ignoring all along. I also learned to express your feelings to others to understand and relate to others emotions. The Hopes and Dreams activity taught me that in order to reach your dreams, you must overcome difficult obstacles." Tyrone-15

"When Release the Fear came I was an angry 15-year-old w/a bad attitude. I wore my hair in my face and walked with my head down because of low self-esteem and zero self-confidence. When the facilitator was talking, I kept thinking, "this is crap, this won't help me." When they introduced the mirror work, at first I didn't even consider it but after Release the Fear left I started doing it a couple times a day, then I did it once a day. I now do it several times a day and have higher self-esteem and even higher self-confidence. I can stick with my decisions and am making one of the biggest decisions of my life, TO TAKE MY LIFE BACK. I'm really just trying to say that no matter who you are or what you've been through, this can help you if you let it. I walk with my head high and a smile on my exposed face and so can you. Take a chance and do this, it's worth it." -Robyn F. 15



What they can accomplish together Communal painting – metaphor for stepping back, looking at their lives and solving problems in a new way.